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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Village Description of Bezsaly/Local Conditions

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**SOURCE**

1. The village of Bezsalı has a total population of 2400 persons. It is situated seven kilometers west of Lokhvitsa. All of the 2400 persons in this village are of Ukrainian ethnic origin.
2. The only means of transportation in the village are horses and mules. In order to ride a train, villagers must go to Lokhvitsa, hitch a ride on one of the state owned and operated trucks which go to the sugar beet factory near Tokari, and get on the train there or they walk to Peski, about three kilometers to the southeast.
3. The villagers walk to Lokhvitsa to do their shopping in the markets. [bazaars]
4. All the streets in the village of Bezsalı are dirt surfaced and the main street is from six to seven meters wide. There are no sidewalks.
5. The village has one Greek Orthodox church which is constructed of wood.
6. The village has no electricity. All the homes are lit by candles or kerosene lamps. Hay, wood or peat is used in the homes for heating and cooking.
7. The average home has from two to three rooms. The homes do not have any running water. Water for cooking and washing is procured from outside water wells.
8. The garbage is disposed of in the garden as fertilizer or to feed pigs and dogs. All the homes have outdoor WCs. A hole is dug, filled, covered, and another hole is dug.
9. Wheat, hay, oats, tobacco and sugar beets are the chief crops grown in this area. The village has many orchards and gardens.
10. There are two red stone buildings in the village which are used for elementary schools. One school has four classes and about 40 students. During the Soviet occupation in 1934-35 one building was converted into a gymnasium.

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11. The terrain west of Bezsalı is flat and slightly higher than the northeast and east side of the village. In the north and northeast section there are marsh lands. After the spring rains it gets very swampy in this area.
12. Starting about three kilometers north of the village, the area is densely covered with forests. In 1928 bands of anti-Soviet partisans hid in these forests. The trees are mostly oak, birch, hazel, maple and lime.
13. The village has one small brick factory employing about 30 persons during the summer season. There is also a flour mill employing about eight persons. The villagers also dig for clay in this area for use in plastering their chimneys.
14. There is no police force or hospital in the village. The mayor has the only phone in the village and his home and office are in the center of the village. This phone is constantly guarded by a watchman. This phone is a local line to Lokhvitsa.
15. One small wooden frame building is used for a theatre where stage plays or films are presented. This theatre could accommodate about 200 persons. During the Soviet occupation in 1934-35 the only church in the village was closed and it was converted into a theatre accommodating about 400 persons.
16. The village does not have a jail. Whenever a person is inebriated he is placed in the fruit cellar under the mayor's home and kept there until he is sobered up.
17. In winter the women wear heavy skirts and blouses, overcoats, woolen shawls which cover the head and shoulders, and boots. In the summer a skirt and blouse are worn, and a kerchief to cover the head. Shoes are worn only by whoever could afford a pair. Some walk barefooted.
18. In winter the men wear long or short jackets, a cap with ear muffs, heavy pants, shirt, leather boots or felt boots. [valenki] In summer they wear a cap, colored or white shirt, pants and shoes.
19. Summers last from May to September and the average temperature is about 20 degrees centigrade. We have much rain in spring and fall. The snow averages about 20 inches in depth, although in 1930 we had a blizzard that almost covered up all the homes in the village.
20. The Sula River is north and east of the village. It is narrow but deep in some places. In the forested area north of the village it is both deep and wide. It has an abundant variety of pike, carp and tench fish. We also drink the river water and swim in it. Skiffs are used on the Sula River. The marsh area also has a lot of wild ducks which we hunted in the fall.
21. The villagers fish with nets. Two men stand on each side of the river hip deep in water each holding one section of the net. About 50 feet in front of them another person also is in the water scaring the fish toward the two men. We didn't have to have a fishing license in the village.
22. The main road runs from Bezsalı south to Lubny via Arkhipovka and the other main road runs north to Yakhniki. Both are dirt surfaced. The road to Lokhvitsa is a secondary road wide enough for two cars and is also dirt surfaced.

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